

Reading Passages and Readability Levels

First Grade	Fall	5	1	0	1.3*
First Grade	Winter	31	6	1	1.5*
First Grade	Spring	73	11	4	1.9
Second Grade	Fall	81	9	2	2.0
Second Grade	Winter	103	8	3	2.5
Second Grade	Spring	120	12	11	2.9
Third Grade	Fall	124	9	10	3.0
Third Grade	Winter	128	10	16	3.5
Third Grade	Spring	165	9	17	3.9

* The readability level for short passages is difficult to pinpoint with exact accuracy. It is important to use sight words and decodable words appropriate for this grade level.

** This number reflects the total number of words in the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) testing passage and not the expected words correct per minute as reflected on the Oral Reading Fluency Chart from page 21 of the IRI Instructional Support Guide.

Decode and Spell

Grade Assessed		
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Consonants	Beginning- all (qu) Ending- b, d, g, m, n, p, t Soft c, g- circle, giraffe
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Ending consonants	x, f, ll, ss, zz **g(e) as /j/: large **ble as/bl/: table
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Beginning consonant blends	bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, br, fr, gr, pr, tr, sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, tw, **str
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Consonant digraphs	ch, sh, th: thin, that, wh, ph
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Ending consonant blends	mp, nd, ft, lt, nt, lf, st, nk, ng
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Silent consonants	ck, kn, lk, wr
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Vowels	Short Long: a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, **igh – high
1 st	Words	vc & cvc words
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	r-control	ar, er, ir, or, ur
1 st and 2 nd	Vowel digraphs	ai, ee, oa, ea
1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd	Variant vowel digraphs	*oo: toot, **ue: glue, oo: book, **aw: paw
2 nd , and 3 rd	Diphthongs	oi, oy, ou, ow
3 rd	Contractions	I 'm, he's, she's, it's, ___ 'll (she'll) ___n't (won't)
3 rd	"y" as long "i"	sky, why, fly, my
2 nd , and 3 rd	Affixes	-s, -er, -ed, -ing, -un
2 nd , and 3 rd	Grammatical endings	Double final consonant+ -ing, drop final "e" + -ing

*Assessed in First Grade

**Assessed in Second Grade

First Grade Skills



First Grade Skills Assessed

Fall

1. Identify words
2. Produce rhyme
3. Write letters
4. Read a sentence
5. Say the first sound

Winter

6. Blend sounds
7. Read a story
8. Sound out words

Spring

9. Read a story
10. Answer comprehension questions
11. Sound out words

Skill One – Identify Words

Notes and Suggestions

Identification of a letter, a word, and a sentence is an important concept of print which students must be taught.

Discuss and use visuals (big books, charts, posters, graphs, overheads) to teach students about how letters, words, phrases, and sentences are different and alike.

Other Concepts of Print include:

- Directionality (left to right, top to bottom)
- Book handling (front, back)
- Illustrations vs. Print
- Parts of a book (cover, title, author, illustrator).

Teaching Ideas

- Poster, chart or pocket chart: Count the words in a single sentence.
- Movement: Use fingers to frame words in a sentence.
- With a sentence clearly visible to all students have them jump, clap, snap, or stomp to each word as you point and read.
- Have the students "be" the words. Give each child one word on a card and have them stand in front of the class to create a sentence. Count the words (students).
- Listening: Tell how many words were in a spoken sentence.

Supporting Research

"When children understand how words work, they can use what they know about one word to construct or take apart another" (Fountas, I.C., and

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G.S. Pinnell. *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*.
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996. 175).

"...basic knowledge about print generally precedes and appears to serve as the very foundation on which orthographic and phonological skills are built" (Adams, M.J. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990, p. 337-8).

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Skill Two – Produce Rhyme

Notes and Suggestions

The ability to rhyme is an indicator of reading readiness. If a student cannot rhyme, he/she may have difficulty reading. Students need to be exposed to rhyme. However, if a student is not able to rhyme do not require him/her to rhyme before moving on to the higher levels of phonological awareness, namely, phonemic awareness.

It is critical that students are taught phonemic awareness in kindergarten and first grade to build the necessary foundation for learning the sound-symbol relationships. Students should learn to detect rhyme, then complete a rhyme, and finally produce rhymes.

Most rhyming activities are completed orally, or with pictures, to avoid confusion with spelling patterns (whale – tail, fly – eye).

Detect Rhyme

- Movement Activity: Stand up if two words rhyme; sit down if words don't rhyme.
- Matching Game: Match two pictures that represent rhyming words or sort pictures into rhyming word groups. Pass out sets of rhyming word cards and have students find their rhyming partner.
- Shared Story: Listen to stories, poems, and/or jingles that include rhyming words.
- Choral Reading: Recite nursery rhymes. Say all words that don't rhyme softly, say rhyming words loudly.
- Bingo Game: Student plays bingo with rhyming word pictures. Directions: Make or use a commercially produced rhyming bingo game. Each student should have a bingo card. Game is played following bingo rules. "Cover a word that rhymes with bat."

Complete Rhyme

- Body Part Game: Student points to a body part to complete rhyme (i.e. Teacher says, "Bed." Student points to head).

Sheet-Feet

Pie-Eye

Tear-Ear

Bib-Rib

Tree-Knee

Deck-Neck

Hose-Nose

Sack-Back

Land-Hand

Rose-Nose

Peg-Leg

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- Complete Couplets (an oral cloze activity): Student gives rhyming response.

Example: Teacher says, "Jack and Jill went up the ____."

Student says "Hill."

Teacher responds, "Yes, Jill and hill rhyme."

A cat in a ____ (hat)

Humpty ____ (Dumpty)

The three little kittens lost their ____ (mittens)

Hey, diddle, diddle the cat and the ____ (fiddle)

Jack Sprat could eat no ____ (fat)

- Student completes the rhyming pattern.

Example: Teacher says, "Hop, pop, ____."

Student responds with any real or made-up word that rhymes. "Stop, drop, yop, etc."

Hen, pen, ____ (den, Ben, ten).

Pot, dot, ____ (cot, lot, tot).

Cat, rat, ____ (Pat, bat, tat).

- Make a student-illustrated class rhyming book.

Snake, snake

Eat a ____.

Bear, bear

Eat a ____.

Fish, fish

Eat a ____.

Teaching Ideas - Produce Rhyme

- Technology/Graphic Software (Kid Pix): Student selects two pictures that represent rhyming words or sorts selected pictures into rhyming word groups.

- Rhyming Game: Student says rhyming word match for answer.

Example:

Teacher says, "I'm thinking of something that rhymes with cup"

Student responds, "Pup or tup or gup

Bit, hit, sit, pit, it, etc.

Sad, dad, had, bad, rad, etc.

Hem, rem, lem, gem, etc.

or "I spy something (in the classroom) that rhymes with cook."

(book), rock- clock, more - door, fable - table, etc.

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- Card Game: Student plays concentration with rhyming picture cards. Each card should have a rhyming partner. All cards are turned over face down. Student turns two cards over to find out if the picture cards rhyme. Play until all rhyming cards are matched.
- Find the Word that Doesn't Rhyme Activity: Student tells word that doesn't rhyme.

Example:

Teacher says, "Tell me which word does not rhyme: fat, hat, bed."

Student responds, "Bed."

Jump, table, bump

Silly, happy, sappy

Rope, soap, pop, mope

- Going on a Trip (using rhyming words): Student thinks of a rhyming word to put in the suitcase. "I'm going on a trip and I'm taking a pan and a can".
- Chart: Student participates in making word family charts.
- Poetry: Student fills in missing rhyming word while a poem is read aloud.
- Literature: Student writes a rhyming book using pairs of words that rhyme.
- Singing: Class sings songs that include rhyming words.
- Bulletin Board: Post picture cards at the top of a bulletin board or chart paper. Students can search magazines to find and post pictures that rhyme with the target picture cards.
- Rhyming Headbands: Student chooses a rhyming picture card to glue to a headband. Student illustrates additional rhyming words to decorate his/her headband.
- Rhyming riddles: Students complete a riddle and include a rhyming word clue.

Example:

I live on the farm.

I have a curly tail.

My name rhymes with jig.

Make into a class riddle book.

- Movement: Pass the Ball: Student passes or catches a ball around the circle. Each time the ball is caught the student must say a rhyming word.

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- Rhyming Charades: Student acts out a word that rhymes with a given word.
- Find a Rhyme: Pass out rhyming cards to all students. Each student finds his/her rhyming pair and sits down. Mix the cards and repeat.
- Remember and Rhyme: Sit in a circle. One student starts off with a simple, one syllable word such as shoe, nest, or hop. The next player says a word that rhymes with the first word. The next players repeat all the rhyming words and add another. Continues until no other rhyming words can be given. Accept nonsense words.

Supporting Research

"Performance on...phoneme manipulation tasks has yielded strong predictions of or correlations with reading achievement" (Adams, M.J. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990, p. 71).

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Skill Three – Write Letters

Notes and Suggestions

Before entering school, most children have learned to name most of the letters of the alphabet – or, at least most of the uppercase letter. The ability to name letters has been shown to be a predictor of reading achievement.

Teaching Ideas

- Trace letters in salt, sugar, sand, hair gel in a plastic bag, or on sandpaper.
- Make letters with clay.
- Paint letters on chalkboard with water – watch them disappear!
- Write letters on whiteboards, overhead, lapboards.
- Use a variety of writing utensils (chalk, markers, crayons, colored pencils, pens).
- Write letters by tracing laminated letters or following a handwriting model.
- Write the Room: Students carry a clipboard and write words from word wall, poetry chart, calendar, etc.
- Have mini-books available for students to make their own books.
- Write the letters of the alphabet, practice letters that are difficult.
- Make an alphabet book.
- Write daily for many different purposes, i.e. journal writing, interactive writing.
- Writer's Workshop, copying from a chart, assignments, putting name on papers, homework, etc.

Supporting Research

Listed as a kindergarten "accomplishment" in *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*: "Can write most letters and some words when they are dictated..." (Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S. & Griffin, P., Eds. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1998 p. 80).

"Thus the speed with which they can name individual letters both strongly predicts success for pre-readers and is strongly related to reading achievement among beginning readers. ... A child who can recognize most letters with thorough confidence will have an easier time

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learning about letter sounds and word spellings than a child who still has to work at remembering what is what" (Adams, M.J. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print: A Summary*. Urbana-Champaign, IL: The Reading Research Center University of Illinois, 1990, p. 43).

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Skill Four – Read a Sentence

Notes and Suggestions

Reading is not developmental or natural, it is learned. Reading difficulties reflect a persistent deficit, rather than a developmental lag in linguistic and basic reading skills. Proficient readers gain meaning from the word level (automatic, unconscious, rapid process) and from the passage level (active, engaged, thinking process). If by sixth grade, a student is reading below 100 to 120 words per minute, she/he won't be able to attend to meaning.

Word Level = Reading Accuracy

Passage Level = Reading Fluency

For *word level/reading accuracy* information please see *Sound Out Words* section.

This section will address passage level/reading fluency.

Reading Fluency:

- is defined as the number of words read correctly in one minute;
- is a strong predictor of overall reading health, but does not provide diagnostic information;
- has a strong correlation with reading comprehension (demonstrated by changes in voice as student makes meaning);
- can be taught.

Please refer to the IRI Reading Fluency Table for words correct per minute counts for grades one, two, and three.

Fluency instruction and assessment include these primary components:

- accuracy in decoding;
- automaticity in word recognition (rate);
- appropriate use of expressive features such as stress, pitch, text phrasing, pace, and punctuation (prosody).

Students can keep records of reading fluency. Students who experience great difficulty reading fluently need intensive monitoring, and should participate in timed reading several times a week.

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Having students practice reading phrases can increase speed and accuracy. See Fry's Phrases included in the appendix.

Teachers should model fluent oral reading behavior on a daily basis.

Students should have daily opportunities for repeated reading at their instructional reading level.

Pre-fluency Activities

- Oral Language: Student listens for sound and feel of printed text (the language of books) as teacher reads aloud.
- Alphabet Reading: Student reads the alphabet in and out of order.
- Name Reading: Student quickly reads his/her own name.
- Student quickly reads names of other students.
- Read Around the Room: Student reads environmental print including songs, chants, and poetry.
- Language Experience: Teacher writes student's words, following a hands-on experience and reads the words back to the student. Student reads words with teacher and independently.
- Auditory Modeling: Live or taped modeling of fluent reading provides an example of where to pause, where to change pitch, and which words to stress.

Teaching Ideas

- Echo Reading: Teacher reads one sentence with appropriate intonation and phrasing. Student imitates oral reading model.
- Neurological Impress: Teachers sits behind student and places reading material in front of student. Teacher and student read together in one voice. Teacher paces the reading and rate is slightly beyond the student's normal rate.
- Choral Reading: Teacher and student(s) read aloud together.
- Paired Reading (Book Buddies): Students read aloud together to improve rate.
- Repeated Reading: Student reads same text several times to improve the many dimensions of fluency.
- Modeled Reading/Lap Reading/Shared Reading: Student listens to, and/or participates in proficient oral reading.
- Readers' Theater: Student participates in a Readers' Theater presentation following the format of Readers' Theater.

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- Poetry Party: Students practice and perform poetry.
- Taped Reading: Student tapes oral reading and charts reading rates. Taped reading can be used for monitoring reading practice, performance, and improvement.
- Radio Reading: Student practices reading a passage to sound like a radio announcer.
- Timed Reading: Student reads aloud and charts reading rate. Track progress over time.
- Fry's Phrases: Student reads phrases to improve phrasing (see appendix).
- Music: Student hums to get the feel and intonation of the words.
- Phrase-Cued Reading: Teacher prepares text with slash marks at phrase boundaries. The student practices reading the text with the cues several times and then attempts without cues.

Supporting Research

"Studies of print have found that just 109 words account for upward of 50% of all words in student textbooks... Knowledge of these high frequency words logically can help the fluency of readers. Many of these high-frequency word carry little meaning but do affect the flow and coherence of the text being read, such as words like the, from, but, because, that, and this" (Reutzel, D.R., and R.B. Cooter. *Teaching Children to Read: From Basals to Books*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 1992, p. 115).

"All students must learn to recognize these words [sight words] instantly and to spell them correctly" (Fry, E.B., J.E. Kress, and D.L. Fountoudidis. *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists*. West Nyack, NY: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993, p. 23-29).

"Repeated reading is a powerful tool. When repeated reading is employed on a regular basis and in engaging ways, students' word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension improve significantly." Rasinski, Timothy V., *The Fluent Reader*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2003 p. 100.

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Skill Five - Say the First Sound

Notes and Suggestions

Some students will need to be directly taught through motor stimulation to become aware of, and sensitive to, sound. Students should have an awareness of the mouth, tongue, lips, and air/wind when making sounds.

Phoneme awareness instruction should begin with simple activities and move toward more complex activities. The following skills are listed from easiest to hardest. Those skills assessed on the IRI are marked with an asterisk (*). If a student is having difficulty with the assessed phoneme skills, work with the student on the skills listed prior to the assessed skill. Phoneme instruction should go beyond what is assessed on the IRI.

Phoneme Skills

(See Sequence of Phonological Awareness Skills Chart [page 23] for more detailed information).

- Sound Discrimination
- Sound Imitation
- Isolation of Initial Sounds *(Match the First Sound and Say the First Sound.)
- Isolation of Final Sounds
- Isolation of Middle Sounds
- Sound Segmentation

Auditory Blending

Phoneme Segmentation

- Sound Manipulation

Deletion

Addition

Substitution

Transposition

Help students distinguish between sound (phoneme) and symbol (letter name). Students should identify both by yearend and begin to map the sounds onto the symbols (phonics).

Phoneme awareness skills require auditory/listening practice and the production of sound(s). Please do not confuse letter-naming activities

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with phonemic awareness practice. Visual materials (pictures) can complement auditory instruction.

Use matching activities if a student has trouble isolating and saying the first sound.

Teaching Ideas

- Object/Picture Sort: Sort objects into beginning sound groups.
- Sound of the Hour, Day, Week: Tell which sounds of three words presented orally (two words begin the same, one word begins differently) are the same.
- Isolate and say the first sound of one orally spoken word.
- Question of the Day: Does your name start with /m/? Students place their name in the pocket chart under "yes" or "no".
- With students in a circle, pass around a telephone. Students say a word into the telephone that begins with the sound of the day. The telephone is passed around the circle with each child contributing a different word with the same beginning sound.
- Teach and create tongue twisters.
- Make the beginning sound of the share object. Think of another object that begins with the same sound.
- Make the first sound of the object taken from the box. Or collect items in a box or bag that begin with the same sound.
- Match name of classmate that begins with spoken sound. Example: Teacher makes sound /m/ student says "Mary."
- Say another word in categories: Animal, Plant, Toy, etc., which begins with a given sound. Example: Animal - teacher says "donkey," student responds with /d/ word "duck." Plant - teacher says "tomato," student responds with /t/ word "tulip." Toy - teacher says "block," student responds with /b/ word "ball."
- Initial Sound Bingo: Follow the rules for Bingo.
- Initial Sound Concentration: Follow the card game rules for Concentration.
- Picture Dominoes: Make dominoes using pictures glued to each end of craft sticks. Match dominoes with same beginning sound.
- Going on a Trip or picnic: Say an item that matches the spoken sound given to put in the suitcase or picnic basket. Example: Teacher says /c/ and students respond with "comb," "clothes," "cup."

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- Stand up, sit down, thumbs up or down for matching beginning sounds heard orally.
- Make an initial sound collage. All pictures begin with the same sound.
- Make an initial sound necklace or headband. Students can illustrate pictures that begin with the same sound or use magazine pictures or pictures from old workbooks.
- Sing a familiar song such as Old McDonald and replace chorus with words that share same initial sound. Example: Teacher sings "...here a pig" and students add animals that begin with the /p/ sound "... here a parrot", "...here a penguin".
- Listen to an alliteration text.
- Create a class alliteration book.
- Use Clip Art or KidPix to create an initial sound book.

Teaching Ideas

"Certainly children without phonemic awareness will have difficulty benefiting from phonics instruction." (Juel C., *Learning to Read and Write in One Elementary School*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag, 1994, p. 4).

"Research has shown that phonological awareness appears to play a causal role in reading acquisition...because phonological awareness is a foundational ability underlying the learning of spelling-sound correspondences." (Stanovich, K.E. "Romance and Reality." *Reading Teacher* (1993-94), p. 280-91).

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Skill Six – Blend Sounds

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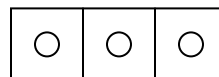
with phonemic awareness practice. Visual materials (pictures) can complement auditory instruction.

Use matching activities if a student has trouble isolating and saying the first sound.

Teaching Ideas

- Onset & Rime Game: Teacher says a word separated into the onset sound (before the vowel) and rime sound (remainder of word) i.e. /b/ - /ox/ for box. Student responds "box".
- Secret Word Game: Teachers makes sounds /s/ - /a/ - /t/. Student blends sounds to say "sat".
- Animal Game: Teacher makes sounds of an animal /c/ - /a/ - /t/. Student blends sounds to say "cat".
- Literature: Teacher reads a story and stops at the nouns and makes the sounds i.e. /c/ - /ar/ for car. Student says "car".
- Pop-Up People: Have three (or more depending on the number of sounds in the key word) volunteers sit in chairs at the front of the class. Tell each child his/her sound. Students pop up, one at a time, and say their sound. Class blends and guesses the word.
- Bubble Gum Stretch: Have students put their hands to their mouths, pretending to stretch bubble gum out in front of them. Saying the word slowly helps students to hear the individual sounds that make up the word.
- Talking Ghost: Say sounds of words slowly like a ghost would - ghhoosssttt, rrruuuuunnnnnn, etc.
- Slow-Down Box: Tape a 2 x 6 foot rectangle on the floor of the classroom. Each time someone steps in the box, they must say the next word very slowly. Demonstrate.
- Simon Says: Follow the regular rules for Simon Says except stretch out the one word of the directions. For example "Simon says, put your finger on your /n/ /o/ /z/. Simon says, rub your /ch/ /i/ /n/.
- Elkonin Boxes: Using Elkonin boxes, slide a marker into a square for each sound of the word.

Say the word.



f i t

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Supporting Research

"Measures of schoolchildren's ability to attend to and manipulate phonemes strongly correlate with their reading success through the twelfth grade" (Calfree, R.C., Lindamood, P.E., & Lindamood, C.H. [1973] Acoustic-phonetic skills and reading: Kindergarten through 12th grade. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, pp. 64, 293-298).

"In other words, children must be made aware of phoneme; that is, they must come to know that words are made up of individual sounds (phonemes). In addition, beginning readers must also come to know that individual sounds combine to make up a word" (Kame'enui, Carnine, *Effective Teaching Strategies That Accommodate Diverse Learners*. 1998).

"Phonemic awareness is a subcategory of phonological awareness and is quite difficult to achieve. It refers to the ability to identify and reflect on the smallest units of sound within syllables: individual phonemes. Children can hear and use these phonemes easily at a tacit level - they can talk and understand when others talk to them. Bringing tacit subconscious awareness of individual phonemes to the surface to be examined consciously and explicitly is a critical goal of emergent literacy instruction. Conscious awareness is necessary to learn an alphabetic writing system" (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnston. *Words Their Way*, 2nd Edition, 2000).

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Skill Seven – Read a Story

Notes and Suggestions

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Teaching Ideas

- Echo Reading: Teacher reads one sentence with appropriate intonation and phrasing. Student imitates oral reading model.
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- Fry's Phrases: Student reads phrases to improve phrasing (see appendix).
- Music: Student hums to get the feel and intonation of the words
- Phrase-Cued Reading: Teacher prepares text with slash marks at phrase boundaries. The student practices reading the text with the cues several times and then attempts without cues.

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Supporting Research

Some of the First-grade accomplishments listed in *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*:

- Recognizes common, irregularly spelled words by sight (have, said, where, two).
- Has a reading vocabulary of 300 to 500 words, sight words and easily sounded out words.
- Monitors own reading and self-corrects when an incorrectly identified word does not fit with cues provided by the letters in the word or the context surrounding the word.
- Uses letter-sound correspondence knowledge to sound out unknown words when reading text.
- Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level

(Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S. & Griffin, P., Eds. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1998 p. 81).

"On the basis of a detailed analysis of the available research that met NRP methodological criteria, the Panel concluded that guided repeated oral reading procedures that include guidance from teachers, peers, or parents had a significant and positive impact on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension across a range of grade levels."

National Reading Panel (2000) *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Reports of the subgroups.

Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Development.

"It is automatic, frequency-based pattern recognition that is responsible for the speed and reliability with which skillful readers process the spellings, sounds, and meanings of words and the spellings and sounds of pseudowords" (Adams, M.J. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990, p. 211).

"Through practice, the reader's decoding can become so fluent that she pays maximum attention to creating meaning from the words she encounters." Rasinski, Timothy. *The Fluent Reader*. New York, NY: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003, p. 76.

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Skill Eight – Sound Out Words

Notes and Suggestions

Decoding or phonics is an important component of reading accuracy. Phonics instruction today is different from the instruction of yesterday. Proficiency in decoding is not enough. Phonics must be used to get to the goal of reading: obtain meaning from print. Phonics instruction should be systematic (follows a logical sequence) and explicit (directly taught). The most reliable indicator of reading difficulty is an inability to decode single words.

National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)

Efficient decoding (automaticity*) requires:

rapid letter retrieval;
rapid sound retrieval; and
rapid meaning retrieval.

*Automaticity requires all three retrieval systems to be intact and work together.

Students should accurately decode 95% of the words encountered in independent reading.

Students should be taught the sound/symbol relationships. Students must be taught how to blend sounds (left to right) to make words.

Students must be provided the opportunity to practice applying phonics knowledge by reading daily in appropriate texts (decodable).

AND

Students must be provided the opportunity to generalize the application of phonics knowledge to a variety of texts.

Please refer to the Decode and Spell Chart (page 29), Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan, and local curriculum guides for teaching sequence.

Phonics lessons should:

- ✓ build on a logical sequence, start from the known and move toward the new;
- ✓ explicitly introduce sound-spelling relationships;

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- ✓ occur daily;
- ✓ be brief and fast paced;
- ✓ encourage students to be curious about words;
- ✓ include periodic review;
- ✓ be tailored to meet the needs of students;
- ✓ allow for flexible grouping;
- ✓ build on the phonic-spelling connection;
- ✓ engage student conversation about patterns of language;
- ✓ provide ample opportunities for children to apply what they are learning about letters and sounds to the reading of words, sentences, and stories.

Teaching Ideas

- Modeled Decoding: Teacher explicitly models sound/symbol correspondence using environmental print, pocket chart, big books, text on the overhead, etc.
- Sentence Reading: Student reads simple sentences to practice decoding unknown words.
- Build a Word: Teacher directs class to spell words. Student uses letter tiles or magnetic letters to spell and decode words.
- Word Families: Teacher introduces a word family such as -op. Students decode -op family words
- Literature: Teacher reads aloud text and directs students' attention to specific phonics elements. Student reads the same text independently to find words that meet the specific phonics elements the teacher instructed them to find.
- Encourage children to notice interesting and/or familiar patterns in literature you are reading.
- Decodable Text: Student reads for practice.
- Word Hunt/Sort: Student hunts for or sorts words by phonetic pattern.
- Decoding Grab Bag: Teacher makes word cards. Student selects a word card from the bag and reads the word.
- Shared writing: Think aloud as you write for the class. "We need to make a list of things we need for our fieldtrip. "Lunches" starts with /l/ just like Laura's name. What sound do you hear next?"
- Independent writing: Encourage students' attempts to write. Instruct them to stretch the word and write the sounds. Push them

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to use environmental print, word walls, and everything they know about letter sounds.

Supporting Research

Listed as one of the First-Grade Accomplishments in *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*:

"Accurately decodes orthographically regular, one-syllable words and nonsense words (e.g., sit, zot), using print-sound mappings to sound out unknown words" (Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S. & Griffin, P., Eds. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1998 p. 81).

"The ability to decode and spell unfamiliar-in-print words is worthless if children don't use the strategies they know while reading and writing. By emphasizing common spelling patterns and helping children use the patterns they sort for to spell other words, children learn how to use familiar patterns to spell words they need in their writing" (Allington, Richard L. and Patricia M. Cunningham, *Schools That Work Where All Children Read and Write*, HarperCollins, NY 1996, p. 226).

"Knowing the letter-sound relationships will result in children sounding out new words which will somehow enter the reading vocabulary and empower the child to read more difficult texts" (Clay, M.M. *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control*. Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann, 1991, p. 289).

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Skill Nine – Read a Story

Notes and Suggestions

Reading is not developmental or natural, it is learned. Reading difficulties reflect a persistent deficit, rather than a developmental lag in linguistic and basic reading skills. Proficient readers gain meaning from the word level (automatic, unconscious, rapid process) and from the passage level (active, engaged, thinking process). If by sixth grade, a student is reading below 100 to 120 words per minute, she/he won't be able to attend to meaning.

Word Level = Reading Accuracy

Passage Level = Reading Fluency

For *word level/reading accuracy* information please see *Sound Out Words* section.

This section will address passage level/reading fluency.

Reading Fluency:

- is defined as the number of words read correctly in one minute;
- is a strong predictor of overall reading health, but does not provide diagnostic information;
- has a strong correlation with reading comprehension (demonstrated by changes in voice as student makes meaning);
- can be taught.

Please refer to the IRI Reading Fluency Table for words correct per minute counts for grades one, two, and three.

Fluency instruction and assessment include these primary components:

- accuracy in decoding;
- automaticity in word recognition (rate);
- appropriate use of expressive features such as stress, pitch, text phrasing, pace, and punctuation.

Students can keep records of reading fluency. Students who experience great difficulty reading fluently need intensive monitoring, and should participate in timed several times a week.

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Having students practice reading phrases can increase speed and accuracy. See Fry's Phrases included in the appendix.

Teachers should model fluent oral reading behavior on a daily basis.

Students should have daily opportunities for repeated reading at their instructional reading level.

Teaching Ideas

- Echo Reading: Teacher reads one sentence with appropriate intonation and phrasing. Student imitates oral reading model.
- Neurological Impress: Teacher sits behind student and places reading material in front of student. Teacher and student read together in one voice. Teacher paces the reading and rate is slightly beyond the student's normal rate.
- Choral Reading: Teacher and student(s) read aloud together.
- Paired Reading (Book Buddies): Students read aloud together to improve rate.
- Repeated Reading: Student reads same text several times to improve the many dimensions of fluency.
- Modeled Reading/Lap Reading/Shared Reading: Student listens to, and/or participates in proficient oral reading.
- Readers' Theater: Student participates in a Readers' Theater presentation following the format of Readers' Theater.
- Poetry Party: Students practice and perform poetry.
- Taped Reading: Student tapes oral reading and charts reading rates. Taped reading can be used for monitoring reading practice, performance, and improvement.
- Radio Reading: Student practices reading a passage to sound like a radio announcer.
- Timed Reading: Student reads aloud and charts reading rate. Track progress over time.
- Fry's Phrases: Student reads phrases to improve phrasing (see appendix).
- Music: Student hums to get the feel and intonation of the words.
- Phrase-Cued Reading: Teacher prepares text with slash marks at phrase boundaries. The student practices reading the text with the cues several times and then attempts without cues.

First Grade Skills



Supporting Research

Some of the First-grade accomplishments listed in *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*:

- Recognizes common, irregularly spelled words by sight (have, said, where, two).
- Has a reading vocabulary of 300 to 500 words, sight words and easily sounded out words.
- Monitors own reading and self-corrects when an incorrectly identified word does not fit with cues provided by the letters in the word or the context surrounding the word.
- Uses letter-sound correspondence knowledge to sound out unknown words when reading text.
- Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.

(Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S. & Griffin, P., Eds. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1998 p. 81).

"On the basis of a detailed analysis of the available research that met NRP methodological criteria, the Panel concluded that guided repeated oral reading procedures that include guidance from teachers, peers, or parents had a significant and positive impact on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension across a range of grade levels."

National Reading Panel (2000) *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Reports of the subgroups.

Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Development.

"Through practice, the reader's decoding can become so fluent that she pays maximum attention to creating meaning from the words she encounters." (Rasinski, Timothy. *The Fluent Reader*. New York, NY: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003, p. 76).

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Skill Ten – Answer Comprehension Questions

Notes and Suggestions

Teachers must directly teach students a number of cognitive strategies to process text.

Lesson Plan Model

- Introduce
- Model
- Guide
- Practice
- Evaluate

Key Comprehension Strategies

- Using prior knowledge/previewing
- Predicting
- Identifying main idea
- Summarizing
- Questioning
- Making Inferences
- Visualizing
- Reflecting

Students must be knowledgeable and flexible about the appropriate use of comprehension strategies **prior to, during, and after** reading fiction and nonfiction text.

Vocabulary development and vocabulary instruction play a vital role in comprehension.

Teaching Ideas

- Elements of literature: Student identifies setting, characters, plot, etc.
- Graphic Organizers provide a visual tool to help process information and show relationships to assist in comprehension. Organizers can also be used to assess learning. Organizers can be used to graphically represent the following thinking processes:

Describe – list descriptive words for a concept, character, or event in a story.

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Cause and Effect – list story events or character actions and what caused them.

Classify – categorize or classify events, things or ideas in a story.

Sequence – record the chain of events in a story.

Compare and Contrast – compare characters or events in a story or one story/author with another.

- **Direct Thinking and Reading Activity (DRTA):** Student follows DRTA format.

Preview the story.

Make a prediction based on prior knowledge and the text.

Read a paragraph and make a prediction about what will happen next.

Justify prediction with evidence from the story.

Continue with more paragraphs.

Discuss whether predictions were accurate or not.

Revise predictions.

- **Question Answer Relationship (QAR):** Student follows QAR format.

Have students read (or read to them) the beginning of a story.

Ask a question.

When answered, have students determine the context for the answer:

In the Book –

“Right There,” “Think and Search”

In My Head –

“On my Own,” “Author and Me”

- **Retelling:** Student retells (verbally, dramatically, artistically) a story, meeting retelling criteria appropriate for grade level.
- **Activate Prior Knowledge:** Preview the text, brainstorm information about the topic.
- **Set a purpose for reading:** for information, enjoyment, etc.
- **What I Know, What I Want to Know and What I Learned (KWL):** Student completes KWL before, during, and after reading.
- **Reciprocal Teaching:** Student follows reciprocal guidelines. Teacher provides support (modeling, guiding, monitoring, feedback) as students learn to apply four comprehension strategies when reading. Questioning – Clarifying – Summarizing – Predicting
- **Questioning the Author:** Student uses text to unlock meaning and determine the author's purpose for writing the text.
- **Listening:** Students listen to and follow directions. Students listen for specific information while text is read aloud.

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- Written Direction: Student reads and follows directions.
- Think Aloud: Model comprehension strategies (predicting, identifying main idea, summarizing, questioning, making inferences, visualizing, and reflecting) out loud. Encourage students to verbalize their thoughts, questions, and connections.
- Making Text Connections: Model making text to text, text to self, and text to world connections. Support students' connections as they promote comprehension of the text.

Supporting Research

"When used in combination, these techniques (comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, use of graphic and semantic organizers, question answering, question generation, story structure, summarization) can improve results in standardized comprehension tests" (National Reading Panel (2000) *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Development).

"Comprehension strategies can and should be taught using a direct explanation approach" (Pearson, P.D. and L. Fielding. "Comprehension Instruction." *Handbook of Reading Research*. Vol. 2 Ed. R. Barr, M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, and P.D. Pearson. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996, p. 818).

"Good readers self-monitor, search for cues, discover new things about text, check one source of information against another, confirm their reading, self-correct when necessary, and solve new words using multiple sources of information." Fountas, I.C., and G.S. Pinnell. *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996, p. 157.

First Grade Skills



Skill Eleven – Sound Out Words

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First Grade Skills



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First Grade Skills



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